

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022*

**Remarks at a Democratic Party Fundraiser in Chicago, Illinois**  
*November 4, 2022*

*The President.* Well, hello, folks. How are you?

*Audience member.* Hey, Joe.

*The President.* How you doing?

*Audience member.* Good.

*The President.* You're doing well? Well, we owe you something big for putting on a coat and tie to come to this. *[Laughter]* How old are you, 16 years old?

*Audience member.* Six.

*The President.* Oh, I knew there was a 6 in there somewhere.

Hey, folks. How are you? God love you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Four days. Four days. Four days. And, folks, you know, I've been bouncing all around the country. And we've been doing rallies. The press is here tonight. I hope they're here tonight. *[Laughter]* And they talk about not very big crowds, but we've had crowds from 3,000 people to 15—they sent away 600 people last—last night because they couldn't fit them in that room.

Folks, I'm not buying the notion that we're in trouble. I'm——

*Audience member.* Exactly!

*The President.* No, no, no, I really mean it. No, no, I'm not joking. I think we're going to do just fine. I really do. I think we're going to keep the House and we're going to keep the Senate.

Because, look, folks—but let me start off and say a few things about your Governor. You may have the most innovative damn Governor in the country. You know, he was—he's the Governor, but he supported all the major pieces of legislation that we've gotten through that, by the way, Sean was very, very involved in getting done.

For example, when we had the American Rescue Plan, well, your State got \$22 billion. And—but here's the deal: He knew what to do with it. He hired cops, firefighters. He kept schoolteachers in the fight. He made things work, and he made sure that it was shared throughout the whole State.

You know, he—I wrote this down because it's unusual. He put—for seven-point—in terms of the American Rescue Plan, he made sure that 120—or 1,200 of your small towns got money—money that they need it. Other Governors weren't doing that. They were hoarding the money. They weren't spending it. They're not using it like they were supposed to.

He came along, and, you know, he's just been a really strong defender of the infrastructure law. He not only is making sure that you're going to have electric vehicles—you can expect a million of them on the road by 2023—but here's the deal: He's building a total—he took \$54 million of the—billion—million dollars of the money to provide those EV stations—electric vehicle stations, like little gas stations all along, so you know they're going to work.

All I guess I want to say is that, you know, he has used—he's used the money imaginatively; he's used it completely authentically, but made it work. He made it work for the State.

And, folks, look, you know, Dick Durbin—Dick Durbin is maybe—[applause]—I'm not joking. Poor Dick knows how much I respect him, so every time I've got a problem: "Hello, Dick. Are you there?" Oh, you all think I'm kidding. No, I'm not kidding. [Laughter] I'm not kidding.

I made a promise that I was going to put—there you are. Hey, Dick. And—no, but I'm serious. Every time I got a problem, I call Dick. [Laughter] And I—but I made a promise we were going to put the first African American woman on the Supreme Court. You know who got it done? Dick Durbin got it done for me.

I said I was going to make my administration, as well as the Court, look like America. We have, because of Dick, we've nominated, and he's gotten passed more African American women appeals court justices of the United States Federal court system than every other President in American history combined, because of Dick.

And up until they figured out how effective he was, we've gotten more—I think it's true—I think we got, as of at least a month ago, more judges passed in the beginning of our term than any other President did up to that time. And we're not stopping yet. [Laughter]

But, Dick, you've been amazing. And you've been amazing in every major piece of legislation as well. We passed some really important things. And so they're—the only drawback is, they've been so good—I'm not being facetious now—they've been so good people haven't realized how good they are yet.

Because, you know, for example, you have for—they—you know, you're—you're talking about over—you know, hundreds of billions of dollars for infrastructure. Well, they're just being built out now. It's just starting.

We have a situation where we just passed a piece of legislation that's going to—Dick and I have been fighting the pharma companies since we got to the Congress. We finally beat them.

No, no, I—it's a big deal. For example, what we did was we made sure anyone on—now Medicare, like the VA, can negotiate drug prices with the—[applause].

And guess what? Guess what? We now—there's not going to be anybody in America on Medicare that has to pay—no matter what the cost—no matter what the cost of their drugs are—even though we have cancer drugs that are \$10-, \$12-, \$13,000 a year—no one is going to have to pay more than \$2,000 a year for all their prescriptions. Not one single person.

In addition to that, we've got—another thing is—because—look, there's a lot going on because of "inflation," quote, unquote. And it's real.

A lot of folks who—I come from a family, like many of you do, where when the price of gas went up or food prices went up, we heard about it at the kitchen table. It was a discussion my dad would have. My dad used to say everybody needs a little bit of breathing room. Just a little bit of breathing room.

Well, look, because of Putin's war, we, in fact, found two things happened: They cut off millions of tons of grain from being able to come out of Russia and Ukraine, primarily. And that sent prices skyrocketing around the world and some countries in Africa in famine—close to famine.

And second, in addition to that, we found ourselves in a position—the cost of energy just absolutely ballooned. It skyrocketed.

Well, guess what? Notwithstanding that, with Dick's help and with the help of your two Congresspersons I'm here for today, we found out that we were able to bring down the price of gas in the last—since this summer by \$1.24, and it's still coming down.

And by the way, if the oil companies did what they're supposed to do and passed the savings on—they made—you know how—the six largest oil companies, do you know how much they made in the last quarter—the last two quarters?

*Audience members.* Billions!

*The President.* \$100 billion.

*Audience member.* Crazy.

*The President.* No, it's not right. And I'm not a big guy saying—going in—going after profit tax. But guess what? I have let them know we're coming.

No, I really mean it. Look, we have not reduced their ability to drill in any of the private lands that they're on or the public lands that, in fact, were already authorized.

Look, folks, they're not—just not doing it. And what they're—and they're cutting back on the refining capacity to keep prices up.

So there's a lot of things going on that we can't directly impact. But we can change the cost of living for people on a regular basis. It makes a big deal. Everybody has costs for prescription drugs, some significantly higher than others. Well, if you reduce that cost, guess what? My dad used to say, "Look, at the end of the month, do you have enough money to pay all of your bills and just have a little bit left over?"

Well, guess what? When you take away those cost of those prescription drugs, when you fundamentally change the cost of health care, when you reduce that cost drastically—which Dick has done and the other Members of the House and Senate have done—that, in fact, reduces the monthly cost for an average American.

It's hard—[inaudible].

[At this point, the President's microphone briefly malfunctioned. He then continued his remarks as follows.]

It's real. And so there's a lot going on. There's more than one way to deal with the cost of living. Because what's inflation? Inflation for people is all about the cost of living.

And by the way, we are going to bring food prices down. And by the way, the other thing is, you know, God love—well, I won't get into it. [Laughter] I shouldn't start. I don't want to start.

But look, Sean and Lauren have been great partners in all of this, across the board. They really have. And you know, Sean is smart, effective, and real. And he is one of the most honorable men I've ever served with. And it matters a lot. You know, he helped lower the cost of the prescription drugs, making big corporations pay their fair share.

You know, we're in a situation where he also, like your Governor and everyone else, wants to see—make sure that the right to choose is alive and well in America.

And he was a leader in Congress on climate. You know, we—they told us we couldn't get it done from the beginning, when I introduced this right from the very beginning.

Well, guess what? In the bill, we got \$369 billion—\$369 billion for climate. And that means everything from making sure that—like your Governor is going to take some of that money and make sure we have these EV stations all over the country. We're going to bill 5,000—[inaudible].

[The microphone malfunctioned again.]

There you go. I've got it there. Okay. It's back.

But I don't want to bore you because you're all standing up. But look—[laughter]—the other thing is, you know, we were focused on—he's focused, as we all are, on public safety. You know, he voted for the gun safety law, the first major piece of legislation on guns we've passed in 30 years.

But guess what? We lost one vote. They knocked out assault weapons. We're coming back for assault weapons. [Applause] No, I mean it.

I'm going to say something self-serving. I was a leader in getting that passed back when I was a Senator. And it lasted for 10 years, and violent crime dropped precipitously, the number. But guess what? We're coming back. As I told all the hunters in Delaware, I don't know how many deer are wearing Kevlar vests that you need an assault weapon. I mean, it's just bizarre.

And by the way, there's a mass shooting every day in America, in our city streets. We've got to stop it. We've got to stop it. And, folks, you know, we're going to keep on—the cops on the beat. And the American Rescue Plan is one of the biggest investments in law enforcement has ever occurred.

And this—all this stuff about—now, sometimes, I think it's—you know, Dick and I have been of the same view that—I'm not a "defund the cops" guy. I'm a "hold the cops responsible" guy, not "defund the cops" guy.

The cops need more help, not less help. But they need—and we introduced a bill that hadn't gotten anywhere—100,000 more cops for—because we want them in the neighborhoods. And we want them in neighborhoods where they're, in fact, required—required to have with them social workers and mental health workers. More cops get shot as a consequence of answering a domestic violence case than anything else.

So we need to give them help. We expect them to do everything. We expect them to be psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and they're not. They need help.

The one thing we don't need to do is, in my view, defund the cops. But here's the deal: We have to hold them responsible. You know, there's good Presidents and bad Presidents. There's good Senators and bad Senators. There's good cops and bad cops. And by the way, I don't know any good cops that like the bad cops. No, I mean it.

So there's a lot we can do. And we agree the answer is not to defund.

And Lauren—Lauren is a nurse. She's not a typical politician. God love her. [Laughter] And, Lauren, I've told you this before: If there are any angels in heaven, they're all nurses, male and female. I'm not joking.

I spent a lot of time in the hospital myself. And by the way, in ICU a long time, and you look up at those—all those monitors and you know, if they go flat, you're dead, but you just want to give up. Even though you're not in pain—I'm serious—at least with me it was that way. And I'd have the nurse—I'll never forget her name—Pearl Nelson, at the—down at the—at Walter Reed. And she'd come over and she'd whisper in my ear. She'd pat my head—she'd pat my head. She'd bring me a pillow. I mean, nurses make you want to live—male and female nurses.

But here's the deal: You know, 10 bills she passed on a bipartisan basis—10 of them. Ten of them.

And tomorrow we're going to talk about our work to protect Social Security and Medicare. You know, she's championed provisions for the families to afford—to save—if you're—families who want to step up their coverage under the Affordable Care Act, well, they got 2,400 bucks last year for a family of four; they get 800 this year. But she's the one who championed it, along with others.

And she's also on our Veterans Affairs Committee, led the fight to pass the PACT Act. You know what the PACT Act says? That's those burn pits. And you know—and I made a commitment. We all—all—all your delegation made a firm commitment that we were going to make sure that we took care of it. We only have one, I think, truly sacred obligation. We have a lot of obligations. We have a sacred obligation to prepare those we send to war, care for them and their families when they come home. It's a sacred obligation. And only 1 percent, as you know—only 1 percent of them protect the 99 percent of us.

I was in and out of Afghanistan and Iraq as Vice President and as Senator, and not as—I haven't been since I've been President. And over 36 times. And they're God-forsaken areas that they're at.

And I was in Iraq a lot. And you know, I've been—I visited—my son was there; he spent a year there. And he was literally about probably no more than 300 yards from what they call—in his hooch, where—in front of one of those burn pits. Those burn pits are the size of football field, not figuratively, literally. They're 8 to 10 feet deep, and they're filled with everything from jet fuel to other contaminants to just—I won't even mention some of the stuff that's in those pits that they burn. Everything.

And guess what? You can smell it. You can feel it. Well, we—more people are coming home from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan with brain injury, cancers than any other war, just like more—before we came up with the up-armored Humvees, more people were coming home as amputees than any war other than the Civil War. And guess what? Not—no help for them.

So we went to work. And we went to work to make sure that they're going to pass the law called—that dealt with these burn pits; to make sure that everyone who, in fact, is—went physically fit, and came back and now is feeling—has headaches, has trouble, has trouble breathing, et cetera—that they can qualify. They can qualify for medical help at the VA, just like we did for acid rain, which I was proud to be part of in the day.

And here's the deal: And those who lost someone, they died as a consequence of this, they should be entitled to the compensation for their families and life insurance, health—I mean, excuse me, educational help that that soldier would have been able to get for his children.

Well, I tell you what—I—as I said, as—I'm not unusual, but my son—my son Beau was a major in the United States Army. He was the attorney general of Delaware. He should be the one talking to you, not me. But my son Beau—excuse me, my son Beau was there for a year. He won the Bronze Star, the Conspicuous Service Medal. He went as the fittest guy in his battalion—his regiment. Not—not a joke. They do these physical things before you go. And he came home, and with stage 4 glioblastoma. And he was—he—anyway. I lost him.

But his children—anyway. He and millions of others, tens of thousands of other soldiers and sailors and marines, et cetera, deserve to be taken care of.

And so, folks, that's the stuff we're doing. That's the stuff that we Democrats are doing. We also made sure that we passed a number of other pieces of legislation, and I'm not going to go into detail with you about.

But everything we've done is about people. The one thing I think Lauren and Sean and everybody and I agree on is: I concluded, and I said it when I ran—I remember I got a little—I got, understandably—even my own staff was critical, because they thought I was wrong. And I often am. [*Laughter*] But I said I was running for three reasons. Not a joke.

When those folks came out of those fields down in Charlottesville, and carrying torches and Nazi swastikas and singing and—anyway, I said that I just was going to have to run against Trump. And one thing led to another. And—but what I said was I was running for three reasons:

one, to restore the soul of the country, decency, and a sense of honor and compassion we have for—some sense of empathy. Because that's who we are. Two is to build this country—build it back up for the middle class—build from the bottom and the middle class up and out. Because when the middle class does well, the poor have a shot, and every—the wealthy do very well. They do very—no, I'm not joking. Not a joke.

And so that's what we've done. I'm so tired MAGA trickle-down economics that—I've had it up to here. Because all I—it's not trickle; money drops on our heads. *[Laughter]*

But anyway, so we did—we passed a lot of important things. I'm not going to go—I'm talking—I apologize.

But look, here's the deal: You know, we're now in a situation where the Republicans are running at us on almost everything—everything—they can think of. But—and you ask yourself, with 4 days to go, "What are they for?" I mean, really, if this were a college class and I was a professor, and I said, write an essay on what is the Republican platform, they have none. Not a joke. All they are is against everything we've done.

And everything they want to do—everything they want to do would make inflation worse. Every single thing. All the thing—they talk about Biden being a big spender and the Democrats. Well, guess what? I inherited a debt that was skyrocketing because of a \$2 trillion tax cut that wasn't paid for that went to just a very few people, not the vast majority of the American people.

And at the same time, I inherited an unemployment rate of 6.4 percent. The last President, he lost—he's the only person since Herbert Hoover who lost—had fewer jobs when he left office than when he came into office, since Herbert Hoover. And he found—and literally, hundreds of thousands of small businesses went bankrupt because of him, because of his policies. And so we had a lot of work to do.

On our watch, with your help and a lot of other people in the Democratic Party, we found ourselves—we went from losing jobs to creating—we've created more jobs than any President has in American history. Ten million new jobs. Ten million new jobs just since we started.

We're down—with the recent report that just came out today, the jobs report, we're down to—the unemployment rate went—ticked up to 3.7, the second lowest in American history, from 3.5.

We're in a situation where everything we have done is consistent with helping people. More Americans are starting new businesses than ever. We're in a situation where, you know, we have—Putin's invasion has really caused a lot of problems. But you know, Medicare prices are going to be coming down across the board. We're—and as I said, a cap of \$2,000 on the total cost of drugs for anyone on Medicare.

You know anybody—you know anybody who's on insulin for badly needed insulin? Well, guess what? They're averaging between four and eight hundred dollars a month to pay for it. Well, guess what? Now it's limited to \$35, period.

And by the way, we're not punishing any of these guys. You know how much it costs to make it? Ten dollars. The guy who invented it did not even ask for a patent because he wanted people to have it. And it costs—counting packaging and everything, you maybe argue it costs as much as 15 bucks to make it. Well, \$35 is a significant profit—significant profit on that 35.

The biggest—as I said, we also—and we finally decided the unreasonable thing. In 2020, there were—of the Fortune 500 companies, there were 55 who made \$40 billion. They paid zero in Federal taxes. Zero. Well, I imposed on them an awful burden of 15 percent. *[Laughter]* Cops and schoolteachers pay a hell of a lot more than that. But guess what? It paid for this.

And in the process of all of this—all of this—Rick Scott, the Senator from Florida, who's in charge of—

*Audience member.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Yes, you can say that again. [Laughter]

He's in charge of electing Republicans—

*Audience member.* Joe, tell 'em!

*The President.* I'm going to do more than tell 'em, I'm going to show 'em.

But here's the deal. He believes—not a joke—these guys—and I—front page in New York Times yesterday—they want to cut Social Security and Medicare. And they're—and by the way, they're flat-out open about it. Flat-out open. Because here's what he says: He wants to put it on the chopping block every 5 years. So every 5 years we're going to have to vote to either reinstate it or get rid of it, one of the two, for both of them.

And then along comes the guy from—this guy, who I even have less respect for, Ron Johnson from Wisconsin.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Well, guess what? He thinks it should be every year. This is not a joke. If these guys make it, every year there's no longer entitlement programs. You've been paying into Social Security, by the way, your whole life, from the time you started work. But he wants—and you either have to—you either have to vote for it and reinstate it, or it's gone. Not a joke.

And he wants to add veterans benefits and a whole range of other things to this. These guys are for real. These guys mean what they say. And they're not going to stop.

Look, folks, the fact is that—you know, with all that's going on, there's a lot that we have a power to do. We have the power to do a great deal to make things better for the American people. And if we just get by and keep this House and Senate, we're going to be okay. But if we lose the House and Senate, it's going to be a horrible 2 years.

The good news is, I'll have a veto pen. No—no, but—but we're at a real—I'll end with this. We're at a real inflection point in American history. We come—it comes along every four or five generations because of technology, because of climate change, because of change in national leadership around the world. Things are changing.

What we—what happens in the next couple years is going to determine what the world looks like 15 years from now. Not a joke. If I had told you that 5 years ago, you'd think I was crazy. But now, what are we all worried about? Elon Musk goes out and buys an outfit that sends and spews lies all across the world. And that's what—it becomes a main—there's no editors anymore in America. There's no editors. How do we expect kids to be able to understand what is at stake? What is at stake.

And so there's a lot going on. A lot going on. But we have an enormous opportunity. An enormous opportunity. And the reason I'm so damn optimistic is not because I'm a wacko Irishman, which is probably true. [Laughter] But the reason I'm optimistic is because of your generation. Not a joke. This generation of 18 to 30 is the best educated, most open, least prejudiced, and most giving generation in American history. They really are. They really are.

And the other piece of this is, we see what's happening around the world. It's dawning on people. I'll conclude by telling you a story. When I got elected, the first major meeting I went to internationally was the G-7, which means the seven largest democracies in the world, in London. And I sat—not London, in England.

And I sat down and I said, "America is back." And Mitterrand [Macron]\* looked at me and he said, "It is?" No, I'm serious. And then he said, "For how long?"

Here's what they said. It was either Scholz or—I can't remember—or Boris that said it to me. He said: "What would you say if tomorrow we woke up and you read that, in England, a group of a thousand people broke down the doors of the Parliament—[inaudible]—down the halls, went to the House of Commons, killed two cops, and ended up overthrowing—trying to overthrow the Government? What would you say?" We'd all be shocked.

The rest of the world is looking to us. Many of you are sophisticated. You get to travel around the world. You understand what people are worried about. Democracy is really on the block.

And we have a chance—a chance not only to come back, but to come back better than we were. We're the only nation in the world—the only nation in the world who—as a student of history—that has come out of crises stronger than we've gone into them. Only one. And we can't stop now. We can't stop now. We have such an enormous opportunity. An enormous opportunity.

And so you're the ones providing the opportunity for the candidates to get there. And I really mean it—I know it's—I know, it's not easy. I know it really costs not only literally, in terms of dollars, but figuratively, what you do. So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And I really appreciate very much. And I think we're going to win. I really do.

God bless you all. Remember, we are the United States of America. There's nothing beyond our capacity. Nothing at all. I really mean it. Nothing.

God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you. Thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:41 p.m. at the Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jay R. "J.B." Pritzker of Illinois; Reps. Sean T. Casten and Lauren A. Underwood; Sens. Richard J. Durbin and Ronald H. Johnson; Supreme Court Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Elon R. Musk, chief executive officer, Twitter, Inc.; President Emmanuel Macron of France; Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany; and former Prime Minister Boris Johnson of United Kingdom. He also referred to his grandchildren Natalie P. and R. Hunter Biden II. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 5. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Democratic Party fundraiser in Chicago, IL.

*Locations:* Chicago, IL.

*Names:* Biden, Natalie P.; Biden, R. Hunter, II; Casten, Sean T.; Durbin, Richard J.; Jackson, Ketanji Brown; Johnson, Boris; Johnson, Ronald H.; Macron, Emmanuel; Musk, Elon R.; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Scholz, Olaf; Scott, Richard L.; Trump, Donald J.; Underwood, Lauren; Underwood, Lauren A.

*Subjects:* Armed Forces, U.S : Servicemembers :: Environmental exposures in war zones; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Commerce, international : Group of Seven (G-7) nations; Communications : News media :: Accuracy and fairness; Economy, national : Inflation; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Energy : Domestic production, promotion efforts; Energy : Electric and hybrid vehicles, promotion efforts; Energy : Gasoline, oil, and natural gas costs; Environment :

---

\* White House correction.

Climate change; France : President; Germany : Chancellor; Health and medical care : Abortion; Health and medical care : Health care workers, service and dedication; Health and medical care : Insurance coverage and access to providers; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Prescription drugs, affordability and costs; Illinois : Democratic Party events; Illinois : Governor; Illinois : President's visits; Infrastructure, national improvement efforts; Judiciary : Federal court nominations and confirmations; Judiciary : Supreme Court :: Associate Justice; Law enforcement and crime : Gun control; Law enforcement and crime : Gun violence, prevention efforts; Law enforcement and crime : State and community law enforcement agencies, Federal support; Republican Party : National Senatorial Republican Committee; Russia : President; Russia : Ukraine, airstrikes and invasion; Social Security and retirement : Social Security program; Social Security and retirement : Social Security reform; Taxation : Corporate tax rates; Transportation : Electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, improvement efforts; Ukraine : Russian airstrikes and invasion; Veterans : Benefits; Veterans : Health and medical care.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202201004.